

length of stay in nursing facilities, and manage high-risk, high-need patients more effectively.

I thank the gentleman for letting me add my voice to folks who don't want to see us do something that is penny-wise and pound foolish. We have a system that is incentivizing well-being and focusing on prevention.

It can really add a lot for the benefit of our seniors, and we all want to see it preserved as it is. Thank you very much for the time.

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. I thank the gentleman from California for taking a minute out of his busy schedule to come and talk about how important Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans are to you and your constituents back home.

Finding ways to collect better and more thorough health information allows for better coordinated care with convenience to our seniors. We should also continue to reward programs that are performing the highest and providing the best care to seniors.

To do that, CMS should also increase the percentage of rebates to reward and promote higher quality while averting negative consequences for beneficiaries.

Other recommendations include keeping beneficiary stability and continuous plan improvement paramount when Medicare Advantage's benchmark calculations and bidding rules.

By rewarding performance, while taking into account the challenges faced in low-income populations, Medicare would accelerate delivery system innovation and keep Medicare Advantage as a viable option.

These are just a few of the smart changes that we should be making to build off the success of this program, instead of cutting these beneficial plans to the detriment of our Nation's seniors.

I am proud to stand with my colleagues today to once again call on the administration to preserve the Medicare Advantage choice for beneficiaries after a lifetime of hard work.

Madam Speaker, we could be facing a serious situation throughout the country. Both sides of the aisle are concerned about the proposed cuts to Medicare Advantage.

Further cuts not only risk new health care efficiencies and innovation, but the health and well-being of seniors who depend on these plans. Simply put, these cuts are counterproductive if it means more hospital readmissions and worse health outcomes.

Cuts already happening this year have resulted in a 10 percent increase in overall out-of-pocket costs for seniors relying on Medicare Advantage, with the annual maximum for these expenses increased by \$560.

For seniors on fixed incomes, that can mean the difference between being able to fill a needed prescription, making a mortgage payment, or putting food on the table.

If further cuts are made to this important program, it would be even

worse, costing seniors an estimated \$50 more a month in out-of-pocket expenses. It is wrong to shift this burden onto seniors.

From Cheryl and her husband from Palm Beach Gardens to Walter from Tequesta to Robert from Palm City to Gary from Port St. Lucie to Lorraine from Fort Pierce, this touches the lives of seniors across my district and across this country.

They deserve better after a lifetime of hard work than having to worry about losing their doctor or the affordable health coverage that works for them.

This doesn't just impact my constituents across the Treasure Coast and palm beaches, but seniors and families across this great Nation.

I thank my colleagues who stood with me today to urge the administration to protect seniors from further cuts, keeping rates flat for this year.

I am committed to fighting for the well-being for seniors on the Treasure Coast and palm beaches, the great State of Florida, and across our Nation, protecting their earned benefits.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

THE WORLD OF NATIONS HOLDS A MORAL OBLIGATION TO UKRAINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WALORSKI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) will control the remainder of the hour.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman MURPHY for yielding. You are such a refreshing, brilliant, positive Member of this House, and I thank the people of your State for sending you here.

I thank you for all the citizens you are fighting for to bring new energy and to bring new vision to our country. Thank you so very much.

Madam Speaker, I entitle my remarks this evening "The World of Nations Holds a Moral Obligation"—and underline "moral obligation"—"to Ukraine."

Seventy years after World War II, let us provide some historical context in which to view Russia's illegal invasion of Crimea and potentially other nations.

Scholars, historians, and diplomats still are piecing together the annals of the horrific slaughter and political oppression of the past century that has plagued the region we call Central and Eastern Europe. The full truth of what happened remains to be told as far too much was locked behind the Iron Curtain.

Masterful books like "Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin" by Dr. Timothy Snyder of Yale begin to present the unfathomable dimension of the horror.

If there is any place on the Earth the world community of nations owes a moral obligation and should seek to pull forward, it is Ukraine.

The suffering and death endured by millions of innocent people inside Ukraine and nations in her immediate environs had no equal any place on Earth. There, the crushing of human life and human spirit were so diabolical and of such gigantic proportion, it is hard for us as human beings to wrap our minds around it.

With clarity, let us recall that American soldiers who liberated Europe during World War II never ventured far enough eastward into Soviet-held territory to witness the grip of that tyranny; thus, the West still holds some naivete about the depths of depravity to which millions of innocent civilian people—mothers, fathers, children, grandparents—fell victim.

George Will quotes Dr. Snyder in a recent piece titled, "Russia's brutality with Ukraine is nothing new." During the 1933 Stalinist-forced famine—here is a quote from the book "Bloodlands,"

Boys from another school pulled out the severed head of a classmate while fishing in a pond. His whole family had died. Had they eaten him first? Or had he survived the deaths of his parents only to be killed by a cannibal? No one knew; but such questions were commonplace for the children of Ukraine in 1933. Yet cannibalism was sometimes a victimless crime. Some mothers and fathers killed their children and ate them. But other parents asked their children to make use of their own bodies if they passed away. More than one Ukrainian child had to tell a brother or sister: "Mother says we should eat her if she dies."

Additionally:

In January 1933, Stalin, writes Snyder, sealed Ukraine's borders so peasants could not escape and sealed the cities so peasants could not go there to beg. By spring, more than 10,000 Ukrainians were dying each day, more than the 6,000 Jews who perished daily in Auschwitz at the peak of extermination in the spring of 1944.

Snyder is judicious about estimates of Ukrainian deaths from hunger and related diseases, settling on an educated guess of approximately 3.3 million from 1932 to 1933. He says that when "the Soviet census of 1937 found 8 million fewer people than projected," many of the missing being victims of starvation in Ukraine and elsewhere, and the children that those adults did not have, Stalin "had the responsible demographers executed."

Ukraine was hell on Earth.

With the able assistance of Ukrainian Museum and Archives in Cleveland, Ohio, and its incredible resident scholar Andrew Fedynsky, let us take a look back before we look forward.

Beginning with the year 1933, as millions of Ukrainians were dying of starvation at the hands of their own government in its forced famine genocide, that terror has gone down in history as the Holodomor, murder by famine; yet few in America or anywhere noted them, even fewer spoke out, to condemn the extinction as American and other western companies were working with the Soviet Government to realize its 20th century industrialization campaign glorified recently at the Sochi Olympics.

Soviet industrialization was paid for by the sale of grain brutally seized

from peasants—or Kulaks—who paid dearly for Soviet progress—so-called progress—with their lives by the millions.

Much of the U.S. media at the time either ignored the catastrophe or actually collaborated with Stalin to cover up that genocide. For this contortion of truth, The New York Times reporter Walter Duranty was awarded the Pulitzer Prize, one of the worst instances of the denial of truth in the history of journalism.

□ 1715

During this fateful period, the United States chose to recognize the Soviet Bolshevik Government. It was not until 50 years later, through legislation I introduced as a first-term Member of Congress in 1983 in this House, that Congress authored the creation of the Commission on the Ukraine Famine to finally acknowledge and recognize the extinction of millions of innocent lives in Ukraine. That ink remains wet on the pages of history.

But to return to the World War II years, by 1938, when Nazi Germany forcibly annexed Austria, in what was termed the Anschluss, too many in the West took at face value Adolph Hitler's assurances that he was merely reuniting German-speaking people.

That same year, Nazi Germany proceeded to annex Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland, as the West negotiated what was called "Peace in Our Time," accepting Hitler's assurances that this was the extent of his ambitions. When his militarized Wehrmacht took over the rest of Czechoslovakia, there was no security response from the West, only petulant words.

Then came 1939, when Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union jointly invaded neighboring Poland in September of that year. Verbally, France and Britain condemned the aggression, but then did nothing. It was only after Hitler turned against his Soviet ally in 1941 and invaded France that the West took the threat seriously. By that time, hundreds of thousands had already been killed. Millions more would die as Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia divided Poland, killing 20 percent of its people, a higher percentage than any other nation engaged in World War II, and began the outsized carnage that carved up Europe between their dictatorships.

By 1944, in a valiant fight to the death struggle, the Polish Home Army, the Armia Krajowa, rose up in a 63-day heroic battle to liberate Warsaw from Nazi occupation. Across the Vistula River, the nearby Red Army refused to join the struggle and instead stood by as Poland's hopelessly outnumbered warriors died. This June in Poland will mark the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising.

Then, in 1945, immediately after the end of World War II, the United States, France, and Germany withdrew their recognition of the long-suffering Polish Government in exile, which had been established after the Nazi-Soviet inva-

sion in September 1939. The West opted in favor of recognizing the Soviet-imposed government that would forcibly rule half of Europe until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, after which began a disassembly of that brutal system of Soviet human domination. And I might add, it was Poland and her spies that broke the Nazi code, and yet this is what the governments of the West did to Poland.

At the end of World War II, in 1945, at the Yalta Conference, ironically held in Crimea, the heads of governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union, headed by Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin, met for the purpose of determining Europe's postwar configuration. Their fateful agreement cordoned off and consigned Central Europe to the yoke of oppression for half a century more, subjugating millions. How many tens of thousands more died within the confines of the Soviet Union? Only God knows.

In furtherance of repressive rule, between 1945 and 1948, the Soviets forcibly imposed puppet regimes across their captive nations like Poland, absorbed them into their empire, and repeated this pattern in nearly a dozen other Central and Eastern European countries through military occupation, government censorship, mass arrests, and rigged elections as an Iron Curtain separated the free world and the subjugated. That was the world that I and millions of liberty-loving people grew up in.

In 1956, the Hungarian people became the first to bravely rise up to cast off the boot of communism and assert their human rights. The Soviet Union dispatched armed tanks, brutally invaded, and imposed mass arrests and executions. You can still see the shots in the buildings inside of Budapest when you travel there. You can see the marks of what those tanks did.

Roman Catholic Cardinal Jozsef Mindszenty was forced to take protective refuge in the U.S. Embassy, where he remained for 15 years in Budapest as a global symbol of noble defiance against Soviet repression and a distant hope that life could change for the better.

The ugly pattern of national theft repeated in 1968 when the Czechs and Slovaks moved to restore freedom in their country. The Soviets invaded again with mass arrests and reimposed their brutal rule.

Starting in 1959, throughout this era of forced nationhood, U.S. and Western support for shortwave Radio Free Europe broadcasts across these captured nations gave hope to the people of Central and Eastern Europe, held as prisoners in their own lands.

When, a decade later, in 1978, Roman Catholic Cardinal Karl Wojtyla of Poland was elected Pope, he became the first non-Italian Pontiff from Central Europe, taking the name John Paul II. His incredible life story in building a religious alternative to the communist

dictatorship in his homeland reawakened the worldwide effort to defeat Soviet communism.

An enlivened Solidarity movement that had begun during the 1950s in Poland through courageous labor activists spread to Lithuania's Sajudis and Ukraine's Helsinki Monitoring Group. America's AFL-CIO, along with united bipartisan support of our government, our Atlantic allies in NATO, and the American public who understood liberty's struggle hung in the balance, remained firm as the cold war tested our resolve.

In 1986, the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl, Ukraine, exposed the incompetence and bankruptcy of the Soviet system as the Soviet Government ordered hundreds of unprotected workers into that radioactive zone, consigning them to certain death. The work of a few brave activists from that horror evolved into a citizen's movement that matured into a forum for popular expression.

By 1989, as the Soviet economy finally collapsed, propelled by its ill-fated decision to wage war in Afghanistan, the Berlin Wall dividing East and West came crashing down as students from Europe danced on the wall, and we could see Central and East European nations one at a time begin to regain their independent, sovereignty, and chance—chance—for freedom.

Then in 1991, 46 years after the end of World War II, the Soviet Union itself collapsed. And in its Ukrainian Republic, more than 90 percent of Ukrainians voted to become an independent nation, including over half of the people in Crimea.

In an act of complete demilitarization in 1994, independent Ukraine gave up the third largest nuclear arsenal in the world. Inasmuch as these weapons were intended to be used against the United States and other Western countries, this gesture immeasurably enhanced American security and world peace. In return, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Russia provided assurances for Ukraine's independence, its territorial integrity, its freedom and economic viability contained in the operative document known as the Budapest Memorandum.

For two decades, the people of Ukraine, digging out of deep repression, have fought to build forward a nation that can govern, feed, and educate its people. They surely dream of becoming the great nation of which they are fully capable, a borderland nation reaching in all directions, west and east and south and north. Ukraine's potential is unlimited. She is already the third largest exporter of grain on the face of the Earth.

But in this new century, the same country of Ukraine found itself in a timeless struggle to elect honorable public officials that would treat people with dignity. Those who assumed power too often stole from the people. Others like President Victor Yushchenko were poisoned as he tried

to transition Ukraine to a modern state. Other leaders were imprisoned. And the latest kleptocratic government, just deposed, stole billions from its own nation, threatening economic growth and democratic progress.

As negotiations to include Ukraine in an economic trade union with Europe were nearly complete last year, the now-deposed, disgraced President Viktor Yanukovich rejected the agreement, triggering mass demonstrations across the nation. The only power the people there have is to stand up and speak out for themselves.

So, in 2013 and this year, we saw hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians begin demonstrating when their government, reacting to Russian economic and political coercion, reneged on its commitment to sign the Association Agreement with Europe. I say to the American people, if you had lived the lives of their great-grandparents, their grandparents, their parents, would you have had the courage to stand in the Euromaidan, would you have had the courage to stand there against the Berkut, against the police that had weapons and you had nothing, nothing but your voice?

The peaceful Euromaidan movement was shattered by government-led violence, scores of deaths and injuries, the ultimate impeachment of a corrupt President who fled his post and his country when mass killings made it impossible for him to stay. His kleptocratic thievery from his own people disgraced him and his administration for all the world to see.

Under Ukraine's constitution, Ukraine's legislative branch, their Rada, their congress, passed succession legislation to elect a new President, a new Prime Minister, and a speaker on an interim basis until free elections can be held this May 25, not long from now.

With Ukraine's eastern region of Crimea now invaded illegally by Russian aggressors, with its sovereignty and territorial integrity violated, and with Crimea forcibly annexed by Russia through a phony election, one must ask why the Atlantic Alliance and NATO, for two decades, left Ukraine largely undefended without a military security umbrella.

What is liberty worth? Have too many people become too middle class to understand the principle of liberty? She stands atop the dome of this Capitol, the Statue of Freedom. It is more than a statue. It is how we live. It is what we stand for. It is why the world respects us.

Is Ukraine to be a nation perpetually stuck in a time warp of history repeating itself? How many more have to die? Do the Budapest Accords mean nothing? Do the words mean nothing on the pages on which they are written?

This past week, this House distinguished itself by passing two measures relating to Ukraine that place our Nation squarely in liberty's corner at this time of testing. Make no mistake; this

is a time of testing. Yet the United Nations, our world's institution charged with assigning peacekeeping forces to troubled hotspots, seems frozen due to the power of Russia's veto inside the Security Council.

Can our world community of nations muster the will to meet this latest threat to liberty? The question is: Can a dictatorship acting unilaterally overrule the aspirations for liberty?

American and international commitments have to mean what they say. History shows us that ignoring the word and substance of those precious documents leads to ever greater challenges ending with potential catastrophe. But international agreements aside, it is a moral obligation of our world community of nations to stand with Ukraine based alone on her tragically brutal history to which her people were subjected over the last century. No people on Earth, no place on Earth suffered more.

So I say to the world community of nations and liberty lovers everywhere: Where do you stand? Where do you stand diplomatically, economically, politically, and militarily? I say to the world community of nations and liberty lovers everywhere: Where do you stand?

A new diplomatic and security architecture is needed to strengthen Ukraine's precarious situation. Her people long for liberty. They have sung to the world, yet they remain undefended against the worst aggression since the fall of the communist empire.

□ 1730

Ukraine—her people—have earned her right for a better day. It is not only in Ukraine's interest, it is in our interest. It is in the interest of what we stand for as the oldest democratic republic on the face of the Earth, yet one of her youngest nations.

William Faulkner's writings remind us:

The past is never dead. It is not even past.

So I say to those who are listening this evening that Russia's brutality with Ukraine is nothing new. The question for us is: What do we stand for? What does this country stand for? What can our leadership provide to the world community of nations to give this great country of Ukraine, whose potential is unlimited, the chance for liberty in this new millennium?

May God bless America, and may God bless those who understand the price of liberty.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 17, 2014]

RUSSIA'S BRUTALITY WITH UKRAINE IS
NOTHING NEW

(By George F. Will)

"Boys from another school pulled out the severed head of a classmate while fishing in a pond. His whole family had died. Had they eaten him first? Or had he survived the deaths of his parents only to be killed by a cannibal? No one knew; but such questions

were commonplace for the children of Ukraine in 1933. . . . Yet cannibalism was, sometimes, a victimless crime. Some mothers and fathers killed their children and ate them. . . . But other parents asked their children to make use of their own bodies if they passed away. More than one Ukrainian child had to tell a brother or sister: 'Mother says that we should eat her if she dies.'"

—Timothy Snyder, "Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin" (2010)

While Vladimir Putin, Stalin's spawn, ponders what to do with what remains of Ukraine, remember: Nine years before the January 1942 Wannsee Conference, at which the Nazis embarked on industrialized genocide, Stalin deliberately inflicted genocidal starvation on Ukraine.

To fathom the tangled forces, including powerful ones of memory, at work in that singularly tormented place, begin with Timothy Snyder's stunning book. Secretary of State John Kerry has called Russia's invasion of Ukraine "a 19th-century act in the 21st century." Snyder reminds us that "Europeans deliberately starved Europeans in horrific numbers in the middle of the 20th century." Here is Snyder's distillation of a Welsh journalist's description of a Ukrainian city: "People appeared at 2 o'clock in the morning to queue in front of shops that did not open until 7. On an average day 40,000 people would wait for bread. Those in line were so desperate to keep their places that they would cling to the belts of those immediately in front of them. . . . The waiting lasted all day, and sometimes for two. . . . Somewhere in line a woman would wail, and the moaning would echo up and down the line, so that the whole group of thousands sounded like a single animal with an elemental fear."

This, which occurred about as close to Paris as Washington is to Denver, was an engineered famine, the intended result of Stalin's decision that agriculture should be collectivized and the "kulaks"—prosperous farmers—should be "liquidated as a class." In January 1933, Stalin, writes Snyder, sealed Ukraine's borders so peasants could not escape and sealed the cities so peasants could not go there to beg. By spring, more than 10,000 Ukrainians were dying each day, more than the 6,000 Jews who perished daily in Auschwitz at the peak of extermination in the spring of 1944.

Soon many Ukrainian children resembled "embryos out of alcohol bottles" (Arthur Koestler's description) and there were, in Snyder's words, "roving bands of cannibals": "In the villages smoke coming from a cottage chimney was a suspicious sign, since it tended to mean that cannibals were eating a kill or that families were roasting one of their members."

Snyder, a Yale historian, is judicious about estimates of Ukrainian deaths from hunger and related diseases, settling on an educated guess of approximately 3.3 million, in 1932-33. He says that when "the Soviet census of 1937 found 8 million fewer people than projected," many of the missing being victims of starvation in Ukraine and elsewhere (and the children they did not have), Stalin "had the responsible demographers executed."

Putin, who was socialized in the Soviet-era KGB apparatus of oppression, aspires to reverse the Soviet Union's collapse, which he considers "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the [20th] century." Herewith a final description from Snyder of the consequences of the Soviet system, the passing of which Putin so regrets:

"One spring morning, amidst the piles of dead peasants at the Kharkiv market, an infant suckled the breast of its mother, whose face was a lifeless gray. Passersby had seen this before . . . that precise scene, the tiny

mouth, the last drops of milk, the cold nipple. The Ukrainians had a term for this. They said to themselves, quietly, as they passed: 'These are the buds of the socialist spring.'"

U.S. policymakers, having allowed their wishes to father their thoughts, find Putin incomprehensible. He is a barbarian but not a monster, and hence no Stalin. But he has been coarsened, in ways difficult for civilized people to understand, by certain continuities, institutional and emotional, with an almost unimaginably vicious past. And as Ukraine, a bubbling stew of tensions and hatreds, struggles with its identity and aspirations, Americans should warily remember William Faulkner's aphorism: "The past is never dead. It's not even past."

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 404. An act to preserve the Green Mountain Lookout in the Glacier Peak Wilderness of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

TIME FOR A PARADIGM SHIFT IN AMERICA'S FOREIGN POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHIO) for 30 minutes.

Mr. YOHIO. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for joining me tonight to talk about foreign aid and saving hard-earned American taxpayers' dollars.

With April 15 fast approaching, Americans will be filling out their tax returns and sending a portion of their hard-earned tax money to the Federal Treasury. It is up to us as Members of Congress to be good stewards of these funds, making sure that they are used to the best ability that we can to get the results desired. Time and again, we hear of wasteful spending in Washington, D.C., and it is long overdue that we commit ourselves to giving proper oversight to how we spend the people's money.

I have made it a priority of mine since having the honor of joining the people's House to commit myself to doing the proper oversight of government. There are numerous examples of domestic programs that are a questionable use of taxpayers' dollars, and many of them should be eliminated. However, there is a United States foreign aid program that caught my eye and the eyes of my colleagues on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

On March 5, 2014, the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade held a hearing: "Threats to Israel: Terrorist Funding and Trade Boycotts." Through that hearing, it was brought to our attention that United States' foreign aid given to the Palestinian Authority has the potential to be funneled into a fund that pays monthly salaries to Israeli-convicted Palestinian terrorists.

Back in April 2011, the Palestinian Authority Registry published the PA Government Resolution of 2010, resolution Nos. 21 and 23, which formalized the long-held practice of the PA's paying a monthly salary to all Palestinians imprisoned in Israel for security- and terror-related offenses. The salaries are paid from the PA's general budget to the prisoners on a sliding scale based on quality, which in this world means, the more vicious the act of terrorism, the more that is paid out. The payments can range from 2,400 to 12,000 shekels per month, roughly \$680 to \$3,400 per month.

It doesn't take a genius to know that money is interchangeable and that, once out of the hands of the American foreign aid, the dollars can easily be used to pay these salaries. It is reported, as of December 2012, salaries have gone to more than 4,500 prisoners who have committed acts of terror, acts of terror that have killed at least 54 U.S. citizens since 1993 and have injured another 83 Americans.

This is totally unacceptable. It is absurd that the United States remains one of the largest donors to the Palestinian Authority while these heinous practices remain on the books.

It is for this reason that my colleagues and I introduced a resolution in Congress that simply says that, until the Palestinian Authority repeals the resolution supporting convicted terrorists, all U.S. foreign aid to the PA should be halted. Representatives WEBER, PERRY, POE, WESTMORELAND, COLLINS, JOHNSON, KING, and FRANKS all feel the same way I do—cut off the funding. I believe this is only fair and should have been done a long time ago. The American taxpayers should not be funding anyone who wishes death upon them or conspires to inflict harm on us or our allies.

According to Palestinian definition, again, more than 4,500 Palestinian prisoners who are serving time for terror-related offenses are recipients of the PA salaries. This means that Palestinians convicted of crimes, such as theft, do not receive a salary, but Hamas and Fatah prisoners receive hefty payments for acts of terrorism.

Madam Speaker, take a moment to think about this. Steal a loaf of bread, and you don't get a check. Blow up a building and commit murder, and you receive a nice stipend from the Palestinian Authority which is funded by the hardworking American taxpayers. The thought of this angers me, and I know it angers the American taxpayers.

Since 2011, Palestinian Media Watch has been documenting international donors' aid money to the Palestinian Authority that is given for salaries and the general budget but that ends up paying the salaries of Palestinian terrorists imprisoned in Israel. These monthly payments to prisoners are paid from the Palestinian general budget fund. According to the language of the Palestinian regulation as well as

Palestinian economic reports on government salaries, the monthly salaries to prisoners range, again, from 2,400 shekels to 12,000 shekels a month. That is \$680 to \$3,400 a month. The average income in that region is between \$4,000 and \$5,000 a year. The Palestinian Authority economic report listed the prisoners' salaries as part of the Palestinian general salary budget, which includes civil servants, military personnel, and others. It was not listed as a social service payment.

Two national bodies exist to process those salaries and other benefits. The Palestinian Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs, established in 1998, is an official bureaucracy of the Palestinian Authority that commands as much priority as the Ministries of Health or Education but with far more gravitas. The Palestinian Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs works in tandem with the semi-official Prisoners' Club, established in 1994. The ministry dispenses the salary. The club functions as an advocate for the prisoners, and it is quite willing to publicly needle Palestinian leadership generally and the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs specifically into providing ever-greater payments and benefits. The ministry channels certain payments and benefits through the Prisoners' Club.

In May 2009, our own GAO issued a report on this very subject, entitled, "Measures to Prevent Inadvertent Payments to Terrorists under Palestinian Aid Programs have been Strengthened but Some Weaknesses Remain." The report explained:

The U.S. Government is one of the largest donors to the Palestinians. It provided nearly \$575 million in assistance in fiscal year 2008.

At least 54 U.S. citizens have been killed in Palestinian terror attacks since 1993, and another 83 have been wounded. The attacks have targeted American tourists, students, and expatriates living in Israel or in areas under Palestinian control.

Ahlan Tamimi helped to mastermind the deadly 2001 bombing of the Sbarro pizzeria in Jerusalem, which killed 15 people. Among those murdered was New Jersey schoolteacher Shoshana Greenbaum. Tamimi, who was released in the Shalit deal, now lives in Jordan, and is unrepentant about her actions. It is terrorists like these who receive monthly salaries from the Palestinian Authority.

Madam Speaker, at a time in the world that is becoming more dangerous, when there are individuals and organizations that wish the United States harm, when the administration is proposing cutting our military to pre-World War II levels, and when we as Americans are \$17.6 trillion in debt, is it smart to be giving money to people in the name of peace who wish to do Americans and Israeli citizens harm?

Our national security is paramount, and as a Member of Congress, I swore